The decline in consumption of phosphatic and potassic fertilisers during 1992-93 is mainly due to the increase in their prices consequent on their decontrol with effect from 25-8-92.

(c) The entire requirement of potassic fertilisers in the country is met through imports as the country does not have any known reserves of potash. The production of phosphates in 1993-94 is likely to be 19 lakh tonnes in nutrient terms as compared to 23.06 lakh tonnes during 1992-93.

(d) The concession of Rs. 1000/- per tonne on indigenous DAP, proportionate per tonne concession on indigenous complexes and Rs. 340/- per tonne on indigenous SSP has decreased their sale prices to farmers and has contributed to improving production of these fertilisers by the fertiliser industry in the country.

**Sophisticated equipment to detect persons lying in rubble in Maharashtra**

2078. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will thhe Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that several offers to send sophisticated equipment that can detect the persons breathing in rubble to speed up the rescue operations in the earthquake affected areas of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the countries which have come forward to offer such sophisticated equipment to detect the persons breathing in rubble in the earthquake affected areas; and

(c) whether Government have taken a decision to accept such offers, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

**Locusts attack in Rajasthan**

2079. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have drawn up any plan to control attack of locusts swarms in Rajasthan as it is feared that the locusts may reappear in Rajasthan within three to four years, indicating the Central assistance given so far under "Operation Locusts Control" to the State Government; and

(b) whether any official level meeting for the exchange of information between India and Pakistan held so far to control and watch the future locusts movement, indicating also the help given so far by the F.A.O. (Food and Agricultural Organisation) in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Locust control in the Scheduled Desert Area in the States of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana is the responsibility of the Central Government. For this purpose, a permanent organisation called Locust Warning Organisation (LWO) has been functioning since 1939. The Government has sanctioned an outlay of Rs. 3.00 crores for strengthening the infrastructural facilities. For effective control of locust incursions during summer, 1993, an additional amount of Rs. 2.80 crores was provided. Besides, international assistance was sought and received through the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

During the recent locust control campaign, the following Central assistance was extended to the State Government of Rajasthan:—Insecticides (479.0 MT of BHC 10 per cent dust), hand dusters (3059 Nos.), power dusters (15 Nos.) and vehicle mounted ULVA-MAST sprayers (1 No.). Besides, both ground and aerial operations were carried out for

controlling locust in the cultivated areas in the Districts of Ajmer, Alwar, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Jaipur, Jalore, Jodhpur, Nagaur, Pali, Rajsamand, Sawai Madhopur, Sikar, Sirohi, Sri Ganganagar and Uaipur.

(b) Six high level Indo-Pakistan Bilateral Meetings have been held since 1975. The last meeting was held at Islamabad on 8-9 June, 1988. Keeping in view the seriousness of locust situation, frequency of border meetings was increased and during the period from June to November, 1993, ten border meetings of the Indo-Pakistan locust officers were held to discuss locust situation and control operations in both the countries.

The following international assistance has been received through FAO so far:—

(i) 15 High Frequency (HF) Radio Sets.

(ii) 20.2 MT of fenitrothion ULV.

(iii) 100 hand held battery operated MICRO-ULVA sprayers.

(iv) 8ULVA-MAST, Vehicle mounted sprayers.

**Revision of price of dried coconut**

2080. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to revise the support price of dried coconut fixed in 1988; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) The Government has already fixed the minimum support price of milling copra at Rs. 2150 per qutl. and that of ball at at Rs. 2350 per quintal for 1993 seasons.

**Harmful effets of pesticide**

2081. SHRI RAJENDRA PRASAD MODY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that farmers in Egypt, China, Malaysia South Pacific, Islands, Costa Rica, Brazil Holland, Sweden and Texas have slashed pestiide use and are harvesting greate yields than before;

(b) whether Government propose t advise the Indian farmers to cut pesticide use by 50 percent to save cost and increase prooduction, as the use of pesticide is proving harmful; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and th reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) The adoption of Integrated Pest Management approach ha enabled the farmers to reduce the consumption of chemical pesticides in many countries.

(b) and (c) In order to minimise th use of chemical pesticides the Government is promoting Integrated Pest Management technology wherein it is advocated that chemiccal pesticides should be used as a last resert on the basis o economic threshold level of pests.

**Policy on agricultural mechanisation**

2082. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: W the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have constituted a Committee to draft a policy o agricultural mechanisation; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that merely three percent of the American population i.e. about seven million people are engaged in agriculture as compard to about 500 million in India;